

## Message Text

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43

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 H-02 /015 W

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P 051931Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8545

UNCLAS PARIS 06802

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:CDES, FR (CONNELLY, ROBERT JAMES)

SUBJECT:DEATH OF ROBERT JAMES CONNELLY

REF: PARIS 05207

1. THIS REPORT MADE IN ANTICIPATION OF POSSIBLE  
CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN CONNELLY CASE.

2. FOLLOWING CONNELLY'S DEATH FEBRUARY 19, 1976 HIS  
BODY WAS SENT TO PARIS MORGUE FOR AUTOPSY. BODY WAS  
NOT RELEASED TO THE UNDERTAKER BY FRENCH AUTHORITIES  
UNTIL MARCH 1. BODY WAS RETURNED TO U.S. ON MARCH 4  
FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF EMBALMING. THIS IS USUAL TIME  
FRAME IN CASES OF PERSONS NOT DYING UNDER MEDICAL  
SUPERVISION. DESPITE OUR INDICATION OF THIS IN REFTEL,  
MRS. CONNELLY GOT IMPRESSION FROM COMMUNICATIONS SHE  
RECEIVED FROM TWA PARIS (DECEDENT WAS TWA EMPLOYEE)  
THAT BODY WOULD BE READY FOR SHIPMENT BY MARCH 1 AND  
THAT HER PRESENCE IN PARIS WAS NECESSARY FOR  
COMPLETION OF FORMALITIES.

3. MRS. CONNELLY, ACCOMPANIED BY HER TWO OLDEST  
CHILDREN AND A FRIEND, DULY ARRIVED IN PARIS ON MARCH 1  
AND WAS UNDERSTANDABLY UPSET AT BOTH APPARENT DELAY IN  
COMPLETION OF ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTRA EXPENSES OF NEED-  
LESS TRIP TO FRANCE. CONOFF DISCUSSED CASE WITH MRS.  
CONNELLY AND EXPLAINED EMBASSY'S ROLE IN SENDING REFTEL  
AND, AT TWA REQUEST, PROVIDING TWA WITH LIST OF UNDER-  
TAKERS. SHE SEEMED SATISFIED WITH CONOFF'S EXPLANATION  
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BUT MENTIONED THAT SHE HAD ALREADY WRITTEN TO

CONGRESSMEN AND OTHER OFFICIALS TO COMPLAIN OF DELAY IN  
RETURN OF HER HUSBAND'S BODY. WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE  
THAT SOME CONFUSION AROSE IN RELAY OF TWA PARIS  
MESSAGES TO MRS. CONNELLY VIA TWA BOSTON, CONOFF GOT  
IMPRESSION FROM CONVERSATION WITH HER THAT SHE HAD BEEN  
PUT INTO HIGHLY EMOTIONAL STATE BY NEWS OF HUSBAND'S  
SUDDEN DEATH (HE HAD PASSED MEDICAL EXAMINATION AS  
TWA FLIGHT ENGINEER ONLY TWO WEEKS PREVIOUSLY). THIS  
STATE MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO MISUNDERSTANDING OF NEED  
FOR HER PRESENCE IN PARIS.  
RUSH

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